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ABSTRACT

A follow-up survey of the 27 students who had either completed the Nursery Education program sequence or graduated with an associate degree in Nursery Education from Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) in June 1977 was conducted in Spring 1978 to determine students' assessment of the Nursery Education program and their perceptions of the program's helpfulness in achieving their vocational and/or educational goals. Two survey instruments were administered. The follow-up questionnaire focused on age at completion of program, sex, employment status, helpfulness of the program in obtaining employment, relatedness of job to education, transferability of courses, relatedness of SCCC major to four-year college major, helpfulness of Nursery Education courses, value of fieldwork experience, and satisfaction with the program. The program evaluation form asked respondents to rate the helpfulness of the Nursery Education program in relation to achieving specific behavioral objectives in the areas of personal development and professional attitudes, practical skills, and theoretical knowledge. The survey achieved a 74% response rate; 60% of the respondents were employed, 20% had transferred to a four-year institution, and 10% were neither employed nor attending school. The survey instruments are included in the study report. (AYC)

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SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CAREERS

NURSERY EDUCATION PROGRAM
FOLLOW-UP SURVEY & EVALUATION
FOR THE CLASS OF 1977

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NOVEMBER 1978

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PROGRAM LEADER
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JC 800 317

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The Nursery Education Graduate Follow-up Questionnaire and Program Evaluation is designed for specific use with those students who have either completed the two-year Nursery Education Assistant Program courses at Suffolk County Community College or who have received an Associate of Arts Degree in Nursery Education from the college. The study was conducted in order to provide the faculty and college administration with information about the outcomes of the program while also attempting to determine the levels of success achieved by the students in attaining their personal educational goals. Since all students were enrolled in the Nursery Education curriculum emphasis, it is assumed that all had, as part of their academic objectives, a desire to pursue employment or advanced degrees in areas concerning children.

SAMPLE

The Nursery Education Graduate Follow-up Questionnaire and Program Evaluation was sent to 27 students who had either completed the Nursery Education Program sequence or graduated from Suffolk County Community College with an emphasis in Nursery Education in June, 1977. Fifteen students had actually graduated in that year. Twenty-three forms were returned, but only twenty were completely filled out. The data that follows is based on the analysis of the twenty (20) completed forms. All students in that class are female.

METHOD

Both the Questionnaire and Evaluation forms were developed and unanimously agreed upon by all instructors in the Nursery Education Program. The factual information asked in the Questionnaire was determined to be vital to any objective assessment of the Program, while the Evaluation form would be used to assess the students' perception of progress toward or achievement of their teaching/ educational goals.

The Evaluation form is presented in a scale format which has been subdivided into three major competency areas: Personal Development and Professional Attitudes; Practical Skills and Theoretical Knowledge. The statements included under each heading were formulated from the behavioral objectives contained in the Program's course outlines. The form consists of a total of fifteen statements in which the student is asked to rate her perception of helpfulness of each area in fulfilling her employment or academic goals by selecting the appropriate heading. The five headings are "Extremely Helpful", "Quite Helpful", "Adequately Helpful", "Not At All Helpful" and "Hindered My Effectiveness".

Students were sent a packet containing a cover letter, the Follow-up Questionnaire, the Program Evaluation form and a postage paid return envelope. The cover letter explained the purpose of

and need for an evaluation of the Nursery Education Program and requested a prompt reply. Although anonymity was promised, all students but one chose to sign their names. A second mailing was sent out to those who did not respond and this resulted in a few more returns. A copy of both the cover letter and the evaluation form can be found at the end of this document.

RESULTS

There were 10 students (50%) who were between the ages of 18 and 23 years, 8 students (40%) between the ages of 24 and 35, and one student (5%) who was over 35. One student did not give her age.

Sixty percent of the students indicated that they were employed in some measure and thirty percent had transferred at the time the questionnaire was received. Twenty-five percent (5) were employed full-time, twenty percent (4) part-time, fifteen percent (3) employed and attending classes as a part-time student. Six (30%) stated that they were full-time students at a four-year institution and 2 (10%) were neither employed nor attending school.

When asked if the college degree itself was helpful in obtaining employment, eleven students (55%) said yes, three (15%) said no. In answering the two-part question as to whether the Nursery Education Program adequately prepared them for their present

positions, 13 (65%) said yes in reference to their academic pursuits while only 1 (5%) answered no to the same and 8 (40%) felt the program adequately prepared them for present employment while 3 (15%) did not.

Seven students (35%) are presently employed in areas relating to Nursery Education and of the 18 students who have graduated from Suffolk as of June 1978, 10 (55%) have enrolled in academic programs related to the Nursery Education field. This means that a total of 17 students (85%) have continued their education or employment in the Nursery Education area.

As to transferability of Nursery Education courses, all were completely transferable to Cortland College, New York, Colorado State University at Fort Collins, St. Joseph's College, New York and Dowling College, New York, which have Education Programs. Only the State University at Stony Brook did not give full credit since they no longer have an education program, and that student is now majoring in Social Science with a minor in Child and Family Care.

Table I, which follows, gives the results of the students' evaluation of the helpfulness of each of the Nursery Education courses.

TABLE I

STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF HELPFULNESS OF NURSERY EDUCATION COURSES

		EXTREMELY HELPFUL		QUITE HELPFUL		ADEQUATELY HELPFUL		NOT AT ALL HELPFUL		HINDERED MY EFFECTIVENESS	
		%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
NE 11	Introduction to Early Childhood Programs	45	9	20	4	30	6	0		0	
NE 22	Early Childhood Activities	70	14	30	6	0	0	0		0	
NE 25	Creative Activities: Art	65	13	25	5	10	2	0		0	
NE 33	Instructing the Preschool Child	90	18	5	1	5	1	0		0	
NE 35	Creative Activities: Music	45	9	15	3	40	8	0		0	
NE 44	The Child and His/Her World	95	19	5	1	0	0	0		0	
NE 45	Creative Activities: Children's Literature & Dramatic Arts	80	16	3	15	0	0	0		0	

In addition to the above and because the field work experience in both NE 33: Instructing the Preschool Child and NE 44: The Child and His/Her World is a basic, practical and philosophical component to the Nursery Education Program, a separate question was included asking the students to indicate the value this experience was for them. Ninety-five percent (19) stated that the field work experience was either "extremely valuable" (85%, 17) or "very valuable" (10%, 2) and one (5%) felt it was "valuable".

The second table presented gives the results of the students' perceptions of the helpfulness of each of the areas listed in fulfilling either academic or employment requirements. Again, both the percentage and number of responses are indicated.

TABLE II

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF HELPFULNESS OF SPECIFIC CURRICULUM/CONTENT AREAS

	EXTREMELY HELPFUL		QUITE HELPFUL		ADEQUATELY HELPFUL		NOT AT ALL HELPFUL		HINDERED MY EFFECTIVENESS	
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES:	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
1. Ability to work cooperatively & effectively with director, aides & teachers.	85	17	10	2	5	1	0		0	
2. Ability to assess personal strengths & weaknesses in the classroom.	65	13	30	6	5	1	0		0	
3. Ability to accept cultural differences.	80	16	5	1	10	2	5	1	0	
4. Ability to understand & work with children on an individual & group basis.	80	16	10	2	10	2	0		0	
5. Ability to involve parents in classroom experiences.	20	4	40	8	25	5	15	3	0	
6. Awareness of professional organizations, conferences & continuing education.	55	11	20	4	25	5	0		0	
PRACTICAL SKILLS:										
1. Ability to design a room permitting maximum freedom for safe exploration.	75	15	20	4	5	1	0		0	
2. Ability to plan experiences based upon observations of child.	70	14	25	5	5	1	0		0	
3. Ability to effectively understand a child's verbal communication.	60	12	35	7	5	1	0		0	
4. Ability to assess child's abilities & needs in planning appropriate experiences.	75	15	20	4	5	1	0		0	
5. Ability to assess group's abilities and needs in planning appropriate experiences.	75	15	20	4	5	1	0		0	
6. Ability to communicate effectively in writing (prepare written records, plans & forms as indicated by your employer/college).	65	13	20	4	10	2	0		0	
THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE:										
1. Information about child development.	90	18	10	2	0	0	0		0	
2. Information about current issues in early childhood.	70	14	20	4	10	2	0		0	
3. Awareness of early childhood education programs.	80	16	10	2	10	2	0		0	

DISCUSSION

The findings of the Nursery Education Assistant Program Survey and Evaluation indicate that the majority of students (over 80%) who have completed the Nursery Education Assistant Program felt that the Program curriculum and experience prepared them for their present employment or academic situations. This is further reinforced by the fact that there were no negative responses by the entire group when asked about the helpfulness of specific courses in the Program The field work experience received consistently high ratings in terms of its value to the students. Accompanying unsolicited personal letters gave further support to this conclusion.

The students' responses toward the achievement of specific behavioral objectives was also very positive, with only the statement "ability to involve parents in classroom experiences" receiving 3 "not at all helpful" ratings. This finding will be considered in next semester's course planning. The high ratings in the area of Theoretical Knowledge also imply that the concepts and philosophies introduced in the course Introduction to Early Childhood Programs (NE 11) were found to be very relevant (over 90%), although when rating the helpfulness of the course itself, only 65% indicated a very positive attitude (30% responded it was "adequate"). This apparent inconsistency may be explained

by the reinforcement these concepts and philosophies received throughout the Program, while the initial impact of these learnings in the Introductory course itself may not be fully appreciated by the students.

The high percentage of students presently involved in the early childhood education area (85%) demonstrates the high interest and motivation level maintained throughout the Program and the support received by students from all faculty members. While most students begin the Program as part-time and/or evening students, many (55%) were encouraged and inspired to continue their education because of the knowledge and growth gained from the course work and field work experience. This desire to develop further, both as an individual and as a professional, can be interpreted as an indication of the quality of the instruction and curriculum content of the Nursery Education Program and is to encourage and foster self-actualization, the desired goal of any college curriculum.

DH/vm
11/22/78

Suffolk County Community College

SELDEN CAMPUS (516) 233-5174

533 COLLEGE ROAD, SELDEN, NEW YORK 11784

April 5, 1978

Dear Graduate:

Many of you have kept in touch with me about your progress and this has been informative and enjoyable. At the present time, the Nursery Education Program at Suffolk County Community College is interested in evaluating the effectiveness of its curriculum in helping you achieve your employment/academic goals. In order to do so, we ask that you respond to and complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please answer pertinent questions and return the forms in the postage-paid envelope.

Your replies will make a significant contribution to future program planning and will be of invaluable assistance in guiding future students. Please help us to provide a more effectiven Nursery Education Program be responding to our survey.

Thank you for you help.

Sincerely,

Darlene Hochman

Darlene Hochman
Program Leader
Nursery Education Program

DH/vm
Enc.

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SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CAREERS

NURSERY EDUCATION GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. a) Year of graduation _____ or if you did not graduate

   b) Year of completing Nursery Education 44 _____

   c) Age at graduation or completion of Nursery Education courses ____

   d) Sex _____

2. Are you now:

   a) Employed full time _____ b) Employed part time _____

   c) Employed and attending classes as a part-time student _____ d) A full-time student at a four-year college _____

3. If employed, please give:

   a) Title of position _____

   b) Employer's name & address _____

   _____

4. Was your degree or education at Suffolk Community College helpful in obtaining employment? Yes _____ No _____

5. Is your present employment related to Nursery Education? Yes _____ No _____

6. If you transferred to a four-year institution, please give name and address of school.

   _____

   _____

7. Please check the Nursery Education courses for which transfer credit was not given:

   ____ NE 11 Introduction to Early Childhood Programs
   ____ NE 22 Early Childhood Activities
   ____ NE 25 Creative Activities: Art
   ____ NE 33 Instructing the Preschool Child
   ____ NE 35 Creative Activities: Music
   ____ NE 44 The Child and His/Her World
   ____ NE 45 Creative Activities: Children's Literature & Dramatic Arts

8. Is your present field of academic study related to your program at Suffolk Community College? Yes _____ No _____

9. Please check the space which best describes your evaluation of the helpfulness of each Nursery Education Course:

	EXTREMELY HELPFUL	QUITE HELPFUL	ADEQUATELY HELPFUL	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	HINDERED MY EFFECTIVENESS
NE 11 Introduction to Early Childhood Programs	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
NE 22 Early Childhood Activities	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
NE 25 Creative Activities: Art	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
NE 33 Instructing the Preschool Child	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
NE 35 Creative Activities: Music	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
NE 44 The Child and His/Her World	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
NE 45 Creative Activities: Children's Literature & Dramatic Arts	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

10. Please check the statement that best describes how valuable the fieldwork experience was to you. Extremely valuable _____ Very valuable _____

Valuable _____ Not valuable _____ Hindered my training _____

11. Did the education received in the Nursery Education Program adequately prepare you for you a) Present employment: Yes _____ No _____
b) Academic pursuits: Yes _____ No _____

12. If you would like to add any comments or suggestions, please do so here.

Your name is not necessary, but if you'd care to, please print it here:

_____.

Thank you!

DH/sd

SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CAREERS

NURSERY EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Please give your perception of the helpfulness of each of the following areas of the Nursery Education Program in fulfilling your employment/academic requirements (place a check under the appropriate heading).

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES:	EXTREMELY HELPFUL	QUITE HELPFUL	ADEQUATELY HELPFUL	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	HINDERED MY EFFECTIVENESS
1. Ability to work cooperatively & effectively with director, aides & teachers.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. Ability to assess personal strengths & weaknesses in the classroom.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. Ability to accept cultural differences.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
4. Ability to understand & work with children on an individual & group basis.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
5. Ability to involve parents in classroom experiences.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. Awareness of professional organizations, conferences & continuing education.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
PRACTICAL SKILLS:					
1. Ability to design a room permitting maximum freedom for safe exploration.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. Ability to plan experiences based upon observations of child.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. Ability to effectively understand a child's verbal communication.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
4. Ability to assess child's abilities & needs in planning appropriate experiences.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
5. Ability to assess group's abilities and needs in planning appropriate experiences.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. Ability to communicate effectively in writing (prepare written records, plans & forms as indicated by your employer/college).	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE:					
1. Information about child development.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. Information about current issues in early childhood.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. Awareness of early childhood education programs.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

DH/sd
4/6/78

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